GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
POWER
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3930
ANSWERED ON:26.08.2011
POWER PROJECTS
Biju Shri P. K.

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether several power projects are lying pending due to techno- economic and environmental clearance in the country including Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor, project-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for the early clearance of power projects in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI K.C. VENUGOPAL)

(a) to (c) : With the enactment of the Electricity Act, 2003, concurrence of Central Electricity Authority (CEA) is not required for setting up of new Thermal Power Projects. However, concurrence of CEA is required for setting up of Hydro Projects estimated to involve capital expenditure exceeding such sum as may be fixed from time to time, by notification by the Central Government. According to the guidelines, in case the Hydro Electric Scheme is found to be technically acceptable with necessary inputs to be furnished by the developers, the Authority shall accord concurrence for implementation of the hydro electric scheme, as far as practicable within a period of 90 (ninety) working days from the date of submission of DPR complete in all aspects.

No Hydro-Electric Project in Kerala is pending presently for want of concurrence of CEA. However, theKerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) has informed that Athirapally Hydro Electric Project for which all clearances were in place and when the project was on the verge of implementation, Ministry of Environment & Forests issued a show cause on 4.1.2010 for revoking the environmental clearance issued on 18th July, 2007. KSEB had submitted its reply to the show cause notice, which was placed for consideration of the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) meeting, held on 22.03.2010 and 22.04.2010. After examining all the environmental issues, representations including those by individuals& Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), site visit report of EAC members, reply furnished by KSEB, the EAC reserved its decision till the KSEB/Tropical Botanical Garden Research Institute (TGRI) substantiate their claim that there will be no change in the Bio-diversity pattern from the published reports including recent study undertaken by Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI).

In the meantime, Ministry of Environment & Forests re-constituted the EAC and the reply to the above, furnished by KSEB and TBGRI were considered by the newly constituted EAC meeting held on 17.07.2010. The newly constituted EAC considered all the aspects of the proposed project and found that the clarifications furnished by KSEB are in order and thus accepted. In the meantime Ministry of Environment& Forests had referred the proposed project proposal to the newly constituted Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP).

The list of Hydro-Electric projects, state-wise, which are presently under examination in CEA for accord of concurrence along with the status of environmental clearance from Ministry of Environment and Forests is given at Annex.

CEA and Ministry of Power review the status of power projects periodically and undertake remedial measures for early clearances of projects.